

An Interview Report: Discourse Analysis

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Abstract: This report presents a discourse analysis of a televised interview between an anchorwoman and Dr. Anthony Fauci, contextualized within the COVID-19 pandemic and its management under President Trump's administration. Employing frameworks from Goffman, Harris, and other key scholars, the analysis explores the interplay of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviors within the communication. It highlights the participants' social, professional, and institutional identities, as well as their discourse strategies, reflexivity, and indexicality. Key components of the interview, including framing, footing shifts, and intertextuality, are analyzed to uncover the underlying dynamics and communicative intentions. The report also examines how the anchorwoman and Dr. Fauci construct authenticity, authority, and alignment within the interactive frame, contributing to a deeper understanding of language use in political and social contexts. Through structured discourse patterns, this study underscores the relationship between language, context, and societal roles in live news interviews.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis; News Interview; Reflexivity; Indexicality; Framing; Footing; Intertextuality; Linguistic Behavior; Social Identity; COVID-19 Pandemic; Political Communication; Media Discourse.

1. Introduction

Zelling Harris(1952) coined the phrase "discourse analysis" in order to examine the interconnection of speech and writing[1]. Two principal areas of interest are involved: the study of language above the sentence level and the connection between linguistic and non-linguistic behavior. Discourse analysis examines linguistic patterns in texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. The report of an anchorwoman and Dr. Anthony Fauci is set in the spread of Corona Virus Disease in America under the leadership of President Trump. Therefore, the context discourse and features will be highlighted in this set. And in this communicative event, the genre of news report has its characteristics of linguists. The typical discourse patterns are marked in transcription conventions in Appendix. We will explore an examination of the context of the text. As Chimombo and Roseberry (1998) state, discourse analysis is intended to foster a greater comprehension and appreciation of texts and the ways in which their readers find meaning in them[2]. So, discourse analysis of this report will reveal the connection between a language's use and its context.

2. Preliminary Questions

The primary framework of the report is a news interview and Dr. Anthony Fauci is interviewed by the hostess. Because the woman dressing in a pink suit is presenting in the news recording room on TV, we know she is the anchorwoman. The man in blue suit is Dr. Anthony Fauci the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who is interviewed by the anchorwoman in the direct broadcast. During the interview, the conversation's theme is the anchorwoman asking Dr. Anthony Fauci whether President Trump trusts his advice or not on epidemic. Genres are activities that people engage in by using language (Brian, 2022)[3]. This interview report is real in which the anchorwoman and Dr. Anthony Fauci engage by using their speaking language. The activity type not only provides information about the setting of situation, but also about the

intent of situation. The purpose of the interview is to figure out the truth of disagreement between Trump and Dr. Anthony Fauci. From the direct broadcast time to now, the Covid-19 has been hitting US. The epidemic confine is crucial and urgent for the government. American citizens as intended audience before TV for the text, intent to find out which side is more reliable between the authority and the profession. The relationship between the anchorwoman and audience can help create authentic interactions and more engagement, spark conversations. Structured activities are described by the activity type, such as background from line 1 to 7, most important facts from line 8 to 15, and lead from line 16 to 18. Actually, the anchorwoman starts her conversation by introducing the title of Dr. Anthony Fauci, raises doubts from line 11 to 15, ask general question from line 16-18. The audience should feel engaged in the conversation. They feel comfortable to ask questions to the profession. The interview can create the authenticity in conversation. Based on the doubts and question, the anchorman can promote the audience's analysis in the issue. As the mass media, it is assumed that the anchorwoman focuses on the social concerns on TV direct broadcast with the audience by communicating with the profession and explain government's opinions. The text also has relationship with the previous public speaking and interview of Trump about his opinions of Dr. Anthony Fauci. Based on the preceding text with the present context, this interview report is generated.

3. Question 1

Goffman (1983) claims that when two or more people are present in a physical setting where they can respond to one another, we might define social interaction as the specific behavior that takes place in those instances[4-5]. This primary frame's participants are the anchorwoman, who is presenting and asking, and Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who is being interviewed. Except for participant who are actually present, those who might be there but are not, those who might encourage or constrain, and those who might present are included in participants (Candlin, Crichton & Moore,

2017)[6]. Therefore, the audience who are watching TV, the Covid infected person, US citizens, the Healthy administration department, Dr.'s working department, and doctors are unseen participants. The director, screen writer, and field affairs are participants as well. President Trump, state governments, federal government, and the congress may encourage or constrain the text are also participants.

Depending on their social identity, participants present play a variety of roles. The anchorwoman uses her social identity as a news reporter, is presenting Dr.'s title from line 3-4 and asking question from line 16-18, because of her work duty and responsibility. And Dr. Anthony Fauci is being interviewed and answering questions due to his profession on epidemic and his position. Thus, the professional identity of them is displayed in the conversation. The professional identity occurs when "Fox News Saying" is referred by the anchorwoman on line 12. While the institutional identity is involved in the title introduction, which means Dr. works for government and his statements stand for authority. Personal identity takes place when anchorwoman thanks Dr. "for being with us" on line 7, Dr. presents his words with "you know" on line 20 and "when you get" on line 22. As if they have the same feeling with each other and have the same "world of human experience" (Candlin, Crichton & Moore, 2017)[6].

Discourse strategy is a deliberate plan of discursive practices and techniques used in discourses to attain a specific goal that is social, political, psychological, or linguistic, according to Reisigl and Wodak (2001)[7]. Asking questions of Dr. to elicit information is the anchorwoman's discourse strategy on line 16,17, 18, 25, 26, 27. In order to respond to these inquiries, Dr. is releasing information as part of his discursive tactics. Their roles are not reversed in the first 30 seconds of interview.

4. Question 2

According Garfinkel's definition of indexicality (Bloch, 2012)[8], the context in which utterances are used determines the meaning rather than the words themselves. By interpreting a speech in light of the context it occurs in, we typically assume what is meant by it. However, in our daily interactions, we make use of common sense information to create meaning and prevent indexicality, which means reflexivity. The anchorwoman's reflexivity occurs on line 8 and 9. When she extends her right hand, nodding her head, says she is sure Dr. has heard the President's talk before. She takes it for granted that Dr. would have heard Trump's statement as she expects, because the previous talk has been reported before their interview. While, the anchorwoman's indexicality occurs from line 10 to 15, she uses "he doesn't, he says" with stressing and further lengthening sound. Actually, her restatement is originated from the President Trump's previous interview report. Her description of the disagreement with Dr. is determined by Fox News Saying. And she uses her body language, such as opening her mouth wide, shaking head, extending two hands, and leaning back to make her believe that Trump contradicts Dr.. Dr.'s reflexivity occurs on line 20 and 22. He employs "you know, when you get" to prevent the anchorwoman's indexicality and make her believe that Trump agrees with him. And Dr.'s indexicality occurs on line 25 and 27. He stresses "White House, task " and extends the sound of "House, yesterday" to convince the anchorwoman and audience that he still works for the leader and government and establish his authority on his working background.

From Goff's (1959) point of view, frontstage is the setting

where the performance takes place. Performance is every action taken by a specific person on a specific occasion that influences another participant in any way. Thus, the performance takes place in the frontstage. The frontstage is displayed in the interview when the anchorwoman as interviewer asks Dr. questions and Dr. answers as interviewee. An example of backstage is on line 8 when the anchorwoman makes sure that Trump disagrees with Dr. This is backstage because it illustrates that the anchorwoman is giving a "knowingly contradictory" between Trump and Dr., which is related to the given interview of Trump by another news report. Eventually, the backstage makes what the anchorwoman and Dr. say understood in the frontstage.

According to Goffman (1974), frames are mainly social and situational, which is to demonstrate how people use multiple frameworks to make sense of events while also creating those events. Most frames are primary frames that are intervened by human and lead people to understand strips. When people watch the interview report, the first scene is the anchorwoman in the news broadcast room, they realize there will be a news report or an interview report. Due to the interactive frame of the text, the anchorwoman and Dr. keep interaction with each other by questions and answers. The anchorwoman organizes the event by presenting the background information from line 1 to 5, important facts from line 6 to 15, and the question from line 16 to 18. There is no interruption between background information and the facts from line 5 to 6, and the anchorwoman speaks at a high speed to lead the audience to the question directly. In order to raise Dr. attention, she raises her tone many times in the presentation of facts and questions. She constructs the frame, in which Dr. is involved in and responses.

What Goffman (1974) refers to as a footing shift might suggest changes in frame. The participants make an effort to change their attitude or position toward one another. On line 23, Dr. denies the statement that the anchorwoman has got with continuous stressed "that, doesn't, really" in falling tone, lengthening sound of "reflect", and blink eyes. That's the footing change of the frame.

Based on intertextuality, the meaning of a text is a collection of other texts, even impacted by the unseen people rather the present participants. For example, in this text, Fox News Saying is cited as the source of Trump's disagreement with Dr in the anchorwoman's presentation of facts. Dr. also refers to the task force meeting hold in White House, which is considered as his alignment with Trump.

5. Question 3

Inference refers to the cognitive processes we employ to get this knowledge and incorporate it into our interpretive process in communication (Gumperz, 1982)[9]. In the text, the anchorwoman builds on what she remembers about preceding talk, her expectation is to find out whether Dr. agrees with Trump or not in the following interview. With her specific background knowledge in her previous interviews, she is trying to convey Dr.'s true personal opinion in this live interview report. So, she employs high pitch, rising intonation, and separates "do you think, the president trusts you, and your advice" into three independent groups from line 16 to 18. As an officer, Dr. intends to answer questions with profession and authority, and show his agreement with President Trump. By stressing "White House, task force meeting" and lengthening "house, yesterday, meeting", combined with head nodding and eye blinking, Dr. attempts to make everyone

believe that he agrees with President, even from his point of view when he uses “I mean, I was”. The anchorwoman gives her implicit assumption about the background belief with the words of “I’m sure” to presuppose that she believes Trump disagrees with Dr on the issue of Covid. Her stressed vocabularies “just, inherited” with the lengthening sound in rising intonation, have the pragmatic meaning that Dr. violates the White House on the literal meanings of Trump’s opposition. Then, her assumption is defeated by Dr. statement in the following words “doesn’t really reflect, what actually goes on”. During the exchange, he employs stresses, falling intonation, prolonged pronunciation, and no interruption in transition of the start and presentation of his opinion. And he blinks eye and nods almost on each line to assure the anchorwoman and audience that he follows the government and works for it.

6. Conclusion

In summary, we can observe how every discourse analysis technique has clarified and made sense of what we observed in the scene.

Appendix

Transcription conventions

A: anchorwoman, F: Dr. Anthony Fauci

1. A: We are joined now::: ↓
2. A: live::: ↓
3. A: by the director ↓ of the National Institute of Allergy ↓
4. A: =and (.) Infectious Diseases↑=
5. A: =Dr. Anthony Fauci=
6. A: =Dr. Anthony Fauci=
7. A: =thanks for being with us(.)
8. A: and I’m sure ((nod head, extend right hand))
9. A: you::: (())have heard (.)↑
10. A: the president ((blink eyes, extend right hand))
11. A: ju:::st speaking about you↑
12. A: to::: Fox News Saying that(.) ((open mouth wide, shake head, extend two hands))
13. A: he doesn’t always agree with you ↑ ((extend two hands))
14. A: he say:::s ↓
15. A: [he inhe:::rited you ↑ ((lean back, extend two hands, open mouth wide))
16. A: =Do you think ↑ ((nod head, extend one hand, stare at

A))

17. A: =the president trusts you ↑=
18. A: =and your advice ↑ ((put down hands, stare at A, lean forward, lips compressed into a thin line))
19. F: =Yeah= ((blink eyes, smack his lips)) (1.0)
20. F: =you know= I think he does ↓
21. F: =I mean =I think ((blink eyes))
22. F: when you get statements like that =
23. F: =that= doesn’t really refle:::ct ↓] ((blink eyes))
24. F: what((blink eyes)) a:::ctually((blink eyes)) goes((blink eyes)) on:::]
25. F: = I mean= I was ((blink eyes, nod head)) at the White Hou:::se
26. F: ye:::sterday (.)↓((blink eyes, nod head))
27. F: = at a task force mee:::ting =and= ((blink eyes, nod head))... [continues]

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